



BHEESHMA

SELFLESSNESS PERSONIFIED

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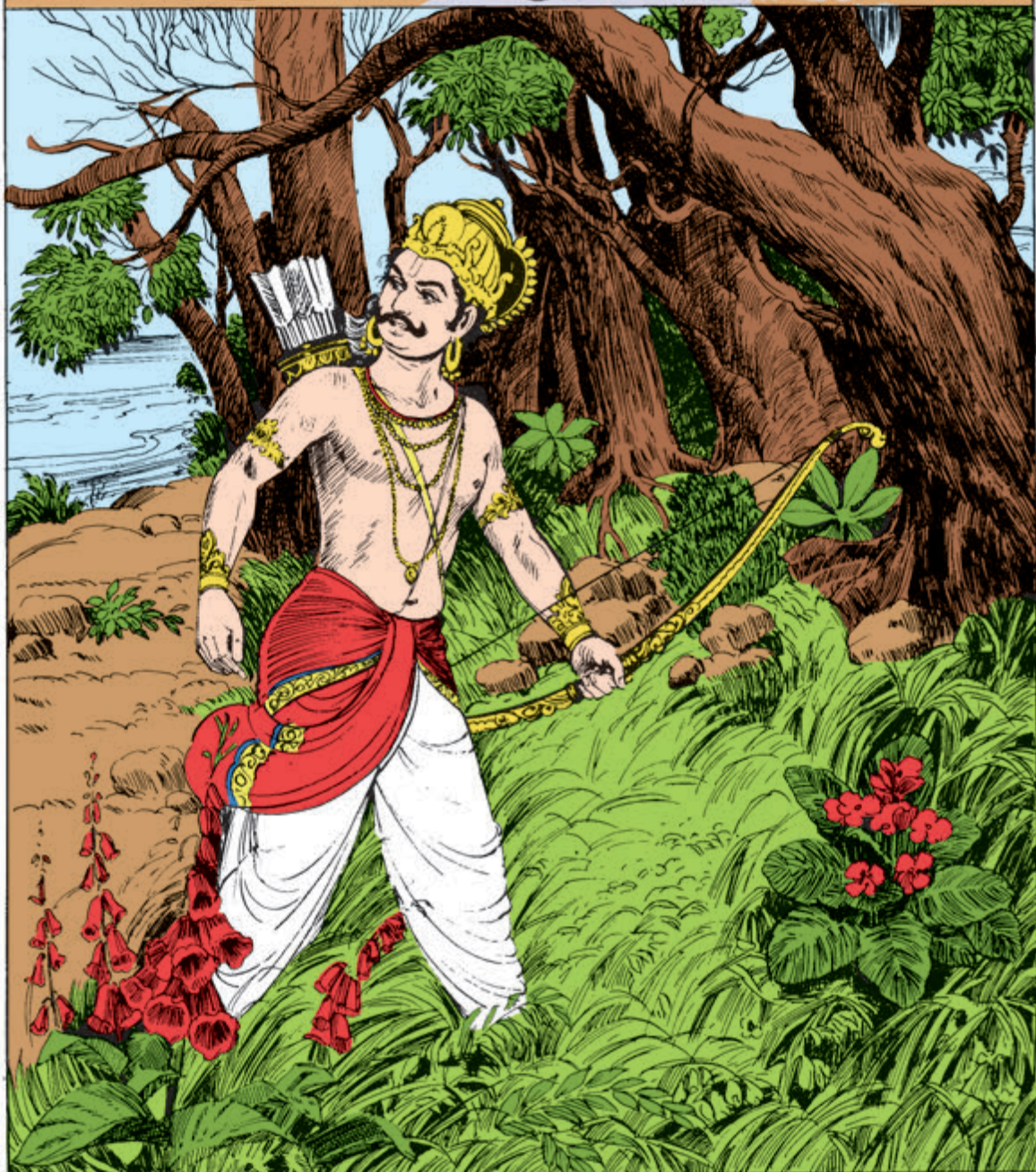
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Bheeshma



ONE DAY, KING SHANTANU OF HASTINAPURA, WHOSE FAVOURITE PASTIME WAS HUNTING, WAS WALKING ALONG THE BANKS OF THE RIVER GANGA IN SEARCH OF DEER AND BISON.

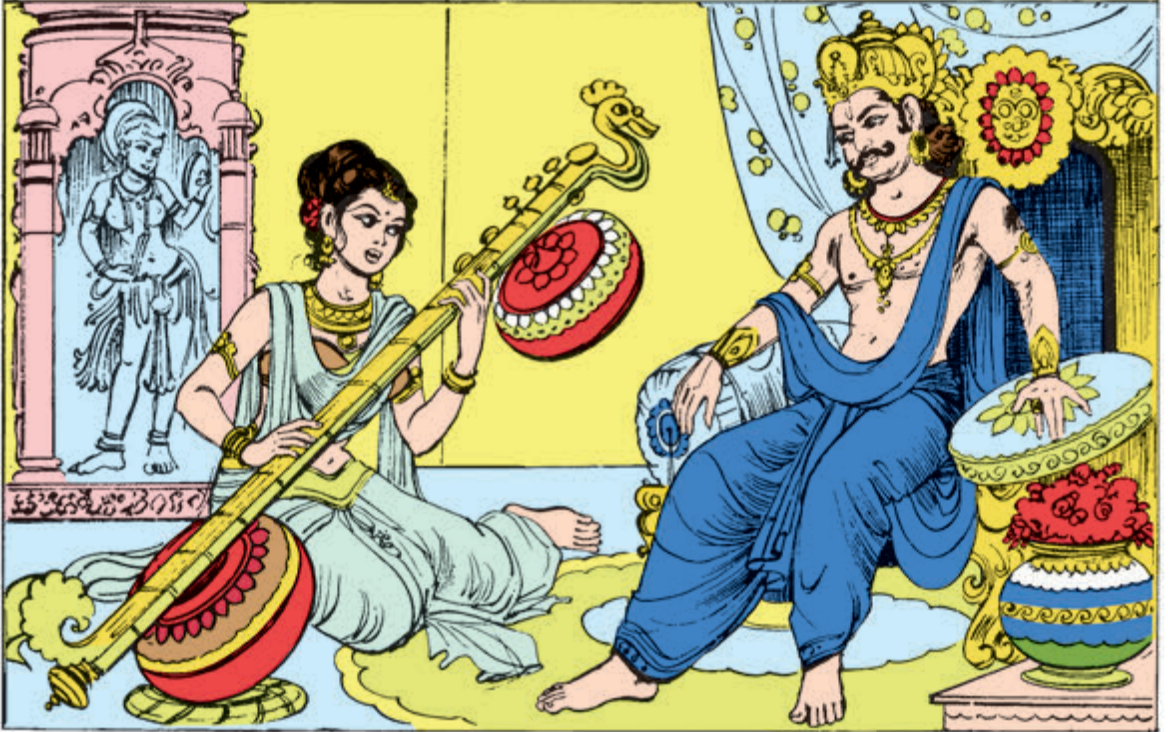
SUDDENLY A BEAUTIFUL MAIDEN APPEARED IN FRONT OF HIM.



SHANTANU FELL IN LOVE WITH THE MAIDEN, AT FIRST SIGHT.



SHANTANU MARRIED THE MAIDEN AND THEY LIVED HAPPILY TOGETHER.



BUT HIS WIFE BEHAVED STRANGELY FOR A WOMAN. EACH TIME A CHILD WAS BORN TO HER, SHE DROWNED IT.



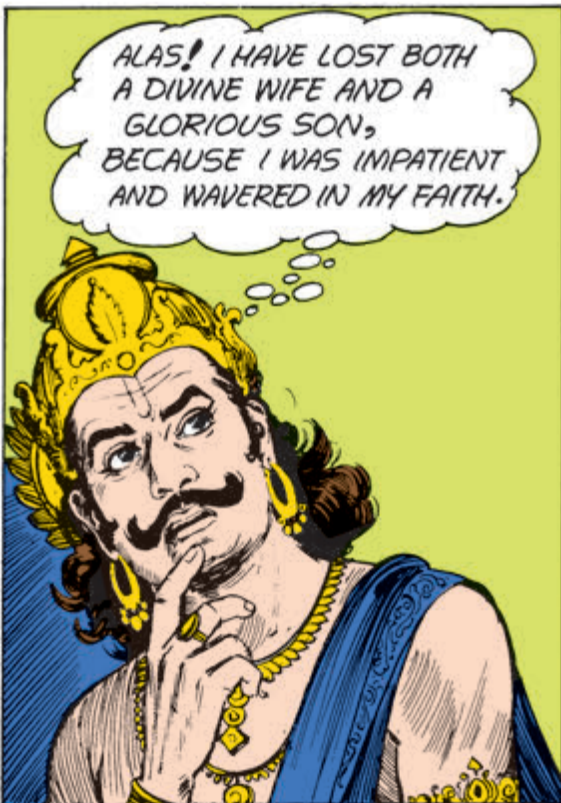
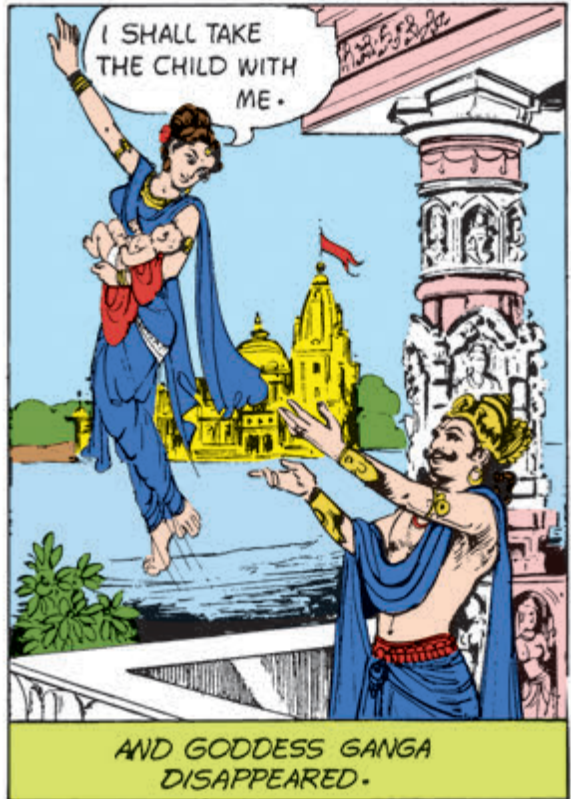
SHANTANU WAS TROUBLED.

IT SADDENS ME TO SEE EACH CHILD OF MINE KILLED. YET I DARE NOT QUESTION MY BELOVED WIFE LEST I LOSE HER ALTOGETHER.



HOWEVER WHEN THE EIGHTH CHILD WAS BORN —

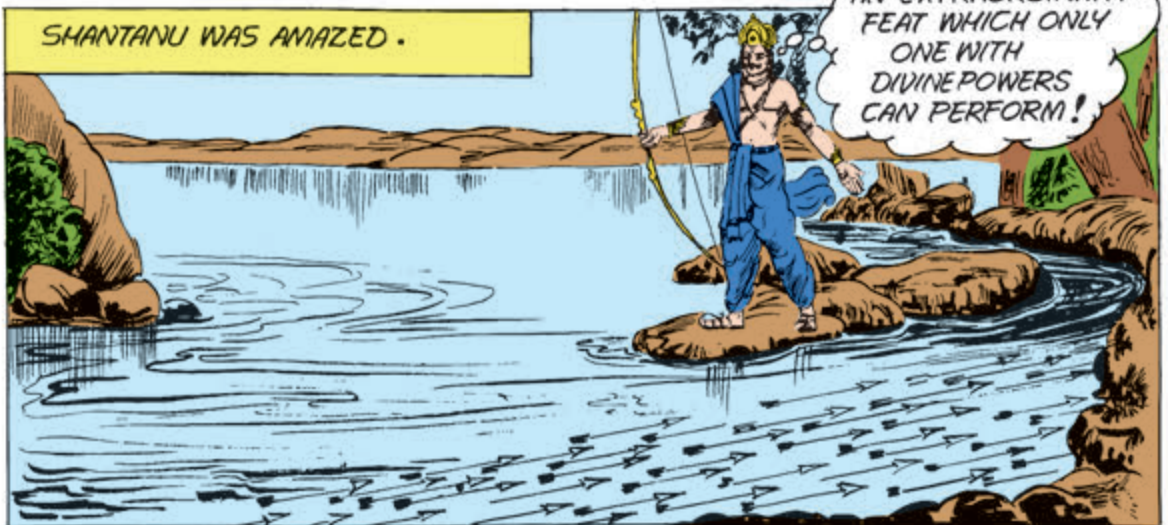




THEN ONE DAY AS SHANTANU CAME ONCE AGAIN TO THE BANKS OF THE GANGES, HUNTING DEER -



SHANTANU WAS AMAZED .



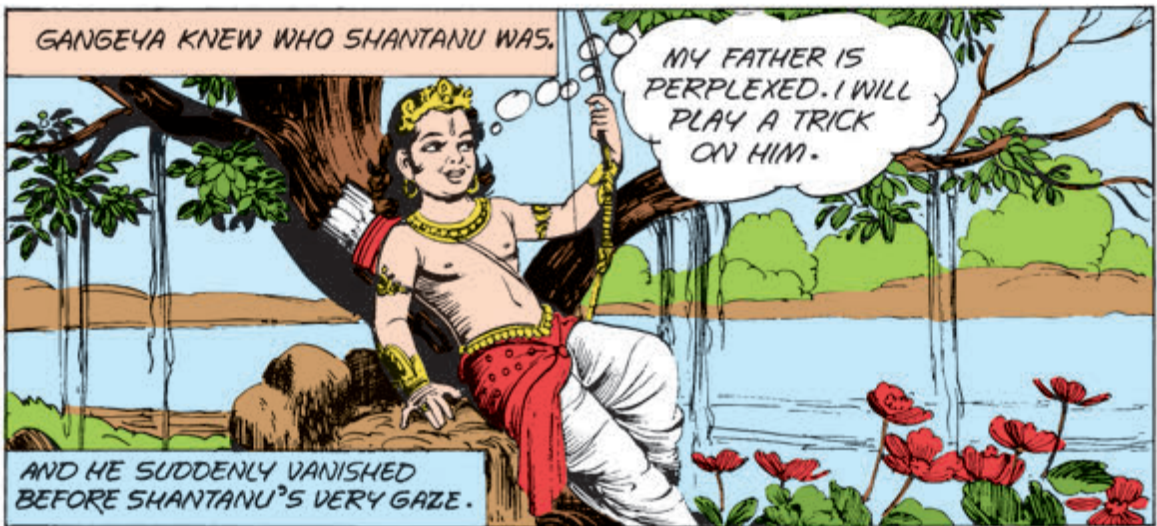
THE BOY WAS GANGEYA, HIS SON, BUT KING SHANTANU DID NOT RECOGNISE HIM.



GANGEYA KNEW WHO SHANTANU WAS.

MY FATHER IS PERPLEXED. I WILL PLAY A TRICK ON HIM.

AND HE SUDDENLY VANISHED BEFORE SHANTANU'S VERY GAZE.



AT THAT MOMENT A THOUGHT SUDDENLY STRUCK SHANTANU.

COULD HE BE MY SON GANGEYA?

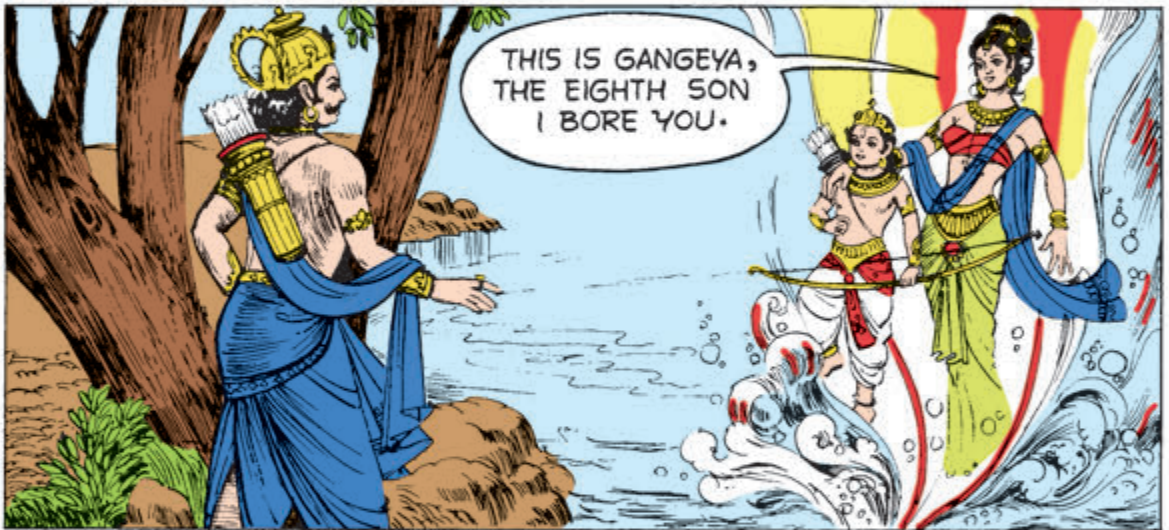


HE CALLED OUT IMPLOINGLY TO GANGA.

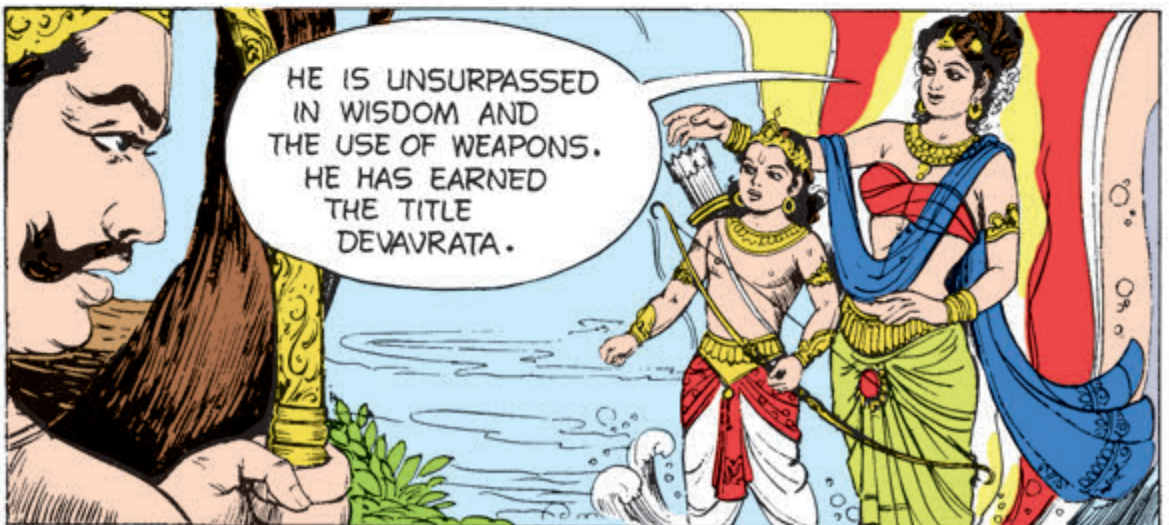
PLEASE SHOW
YOURSELF AND THAT
MARVELLOUS YOUTH.
ISN'T HE
MINE?

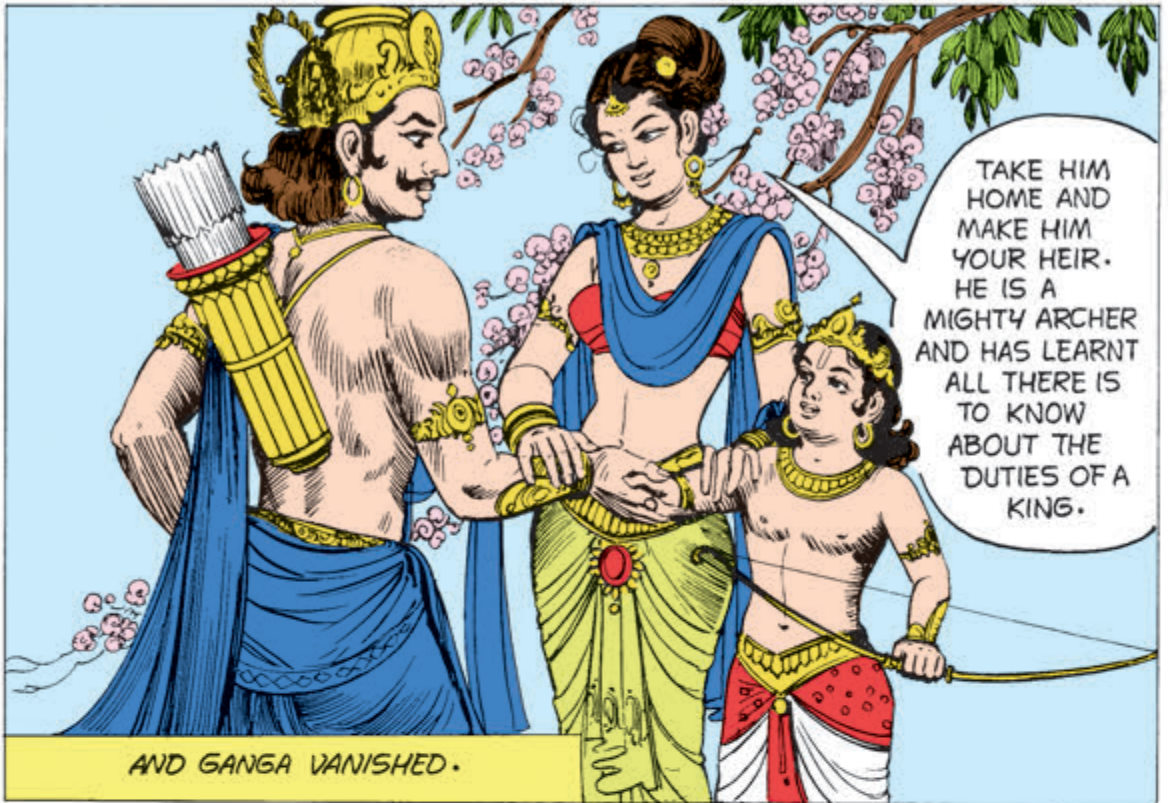


THIS IS GANGEYA,
THE EIGHTH SON
I BORE YOU.



HE IS UNSURPASSED
IN WISDOM AND
THE USE OF WEAPONS.
HE HAS EARNED
THE TITLE
DEVAVRATA.

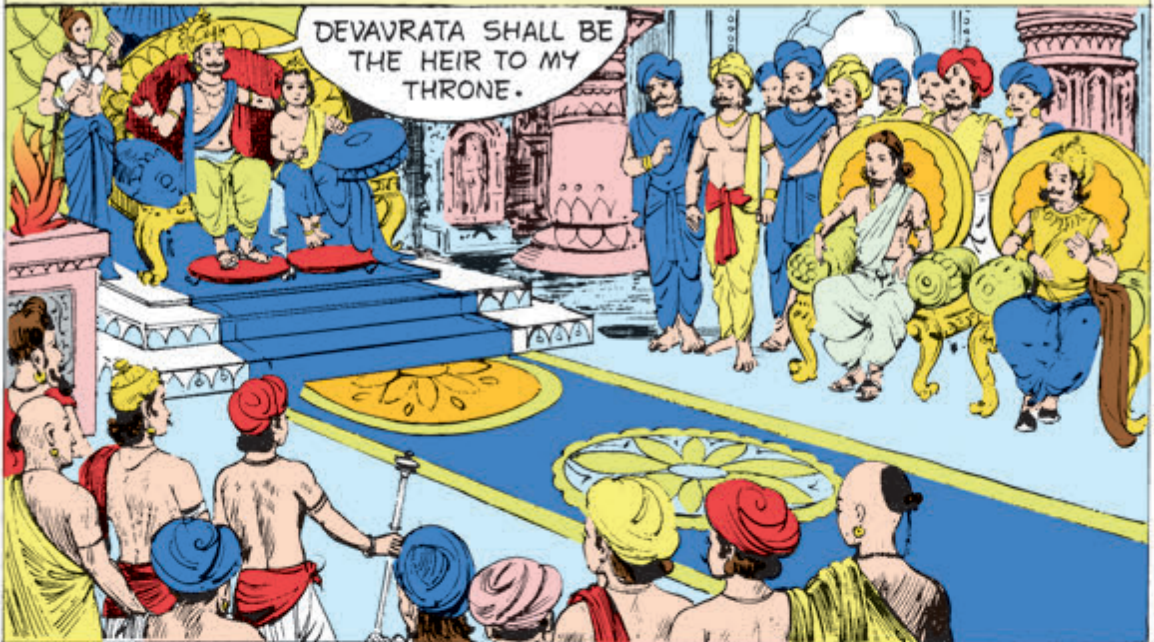




SHANTANU TOOK DEVAVRATA AND RETURNED HOME JOYFULLY.



WHEN THEY REACHED HIS PALACE HE SUMMONED ALL HIS KINSMEN, THE PAURAVAS, TO HIM.



THE PAURAVAS LOOKING UPON THE GODLIKE YOUTH, ADMIRED HIM.

DEVAVRATA SOON EARNED THEIR LOVE ...



... AND THEIR RESPECT TOO.



SHANTANU WAS HAPPY TO HAVE SUCH A WORTHY SON AND HEIR. BUT STILL HE FELT LONELY AT TIMES.



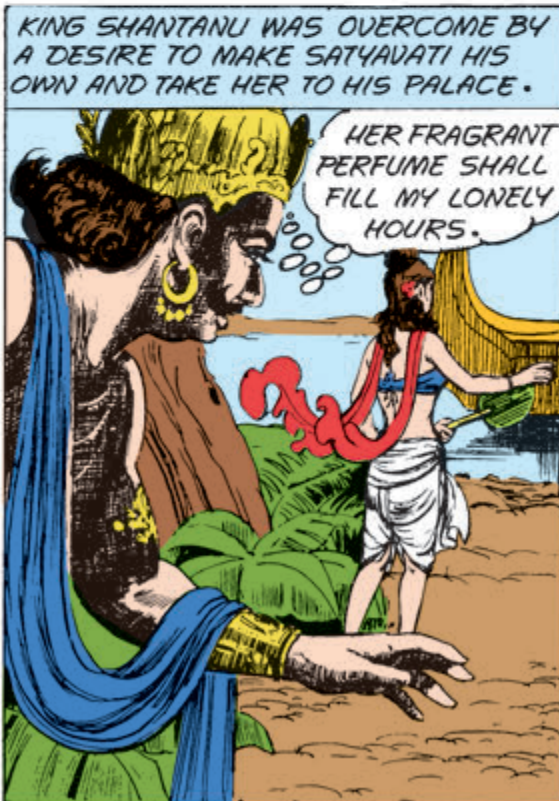
AT SUCH MOMENTS, HE TOOK LONG WALKS, ALONE, ALONG THE BANKS OF THE YAMUNA.

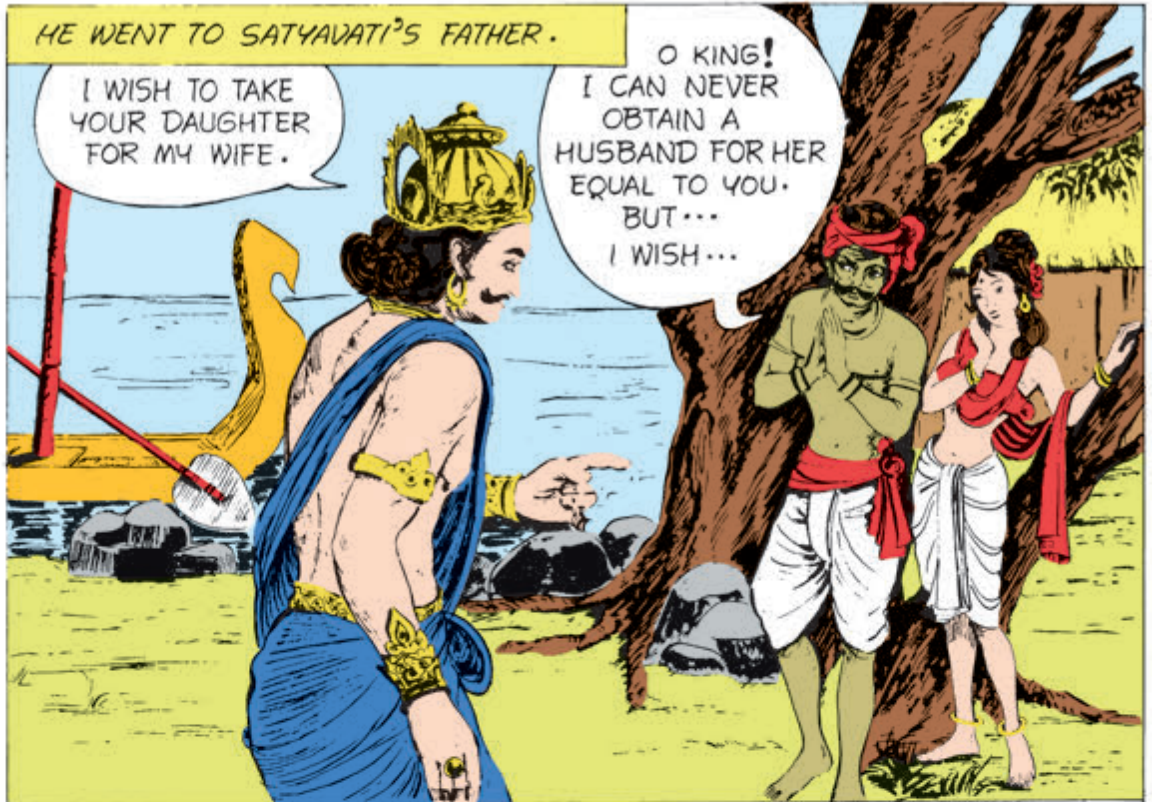


ON ONE SUCH WALK -

AH! WHAT A DIVINE FRAGRANCE!
WHERE IS IT FROM?







SHANTANU WAS DISMAYED.

HOW CAN I
DISINHERIT MY
DEVAVRATA?



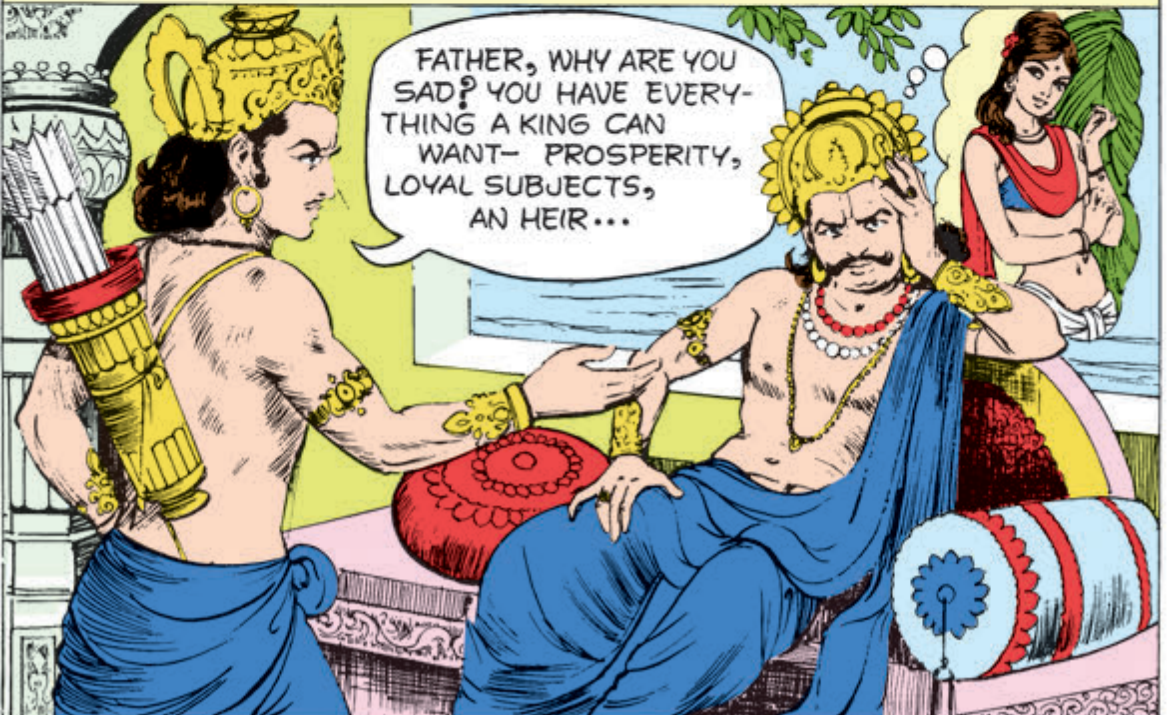
HE RETURNED TO HIS PALACE, HIS
THOUGHTS FULL OF SATYAVATI.

AND YET
MY LIFE IS
MEANINGLESS IF
I CANNOT MARRY SATYAVATI.



AT HASTINAPUR HE PASSED HIS DAYS, LOST IN HIS LONGINGS. ONE DAY-

FATHER, WHY ARE YOU
SAD? YOU HAVE EVERY-
THING A KING CAN
WANT- PROSPERITY,
LOYAL SUBJECTS,
AN HEIR...



SHANTANU WAS QUICK TO ANSWER.

YOU ARE MY ONLY SON. YOU ARE AN EXCELLENT ARCHER AND YOU WELCOME COMBATS.



SUPPOSING YOU ARE SLAIN, WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE BHARAT DYNASTY? IT IS THIS THOUGHT THAT WORRIES ME.



BUT DEVAVRATA WAS TOO INTELLIGENT TO BE TAKEN IN BY THESE WORDS.

I MUST FIND OUT WHAT SECRET LONGING NAGS MY FATHER.



SO HE WENT TO AN OLD MINISTER WHO WAS DEVOTED TO HIS FATHER.



THE MINISTER HESITATED FOR A SECOND. THEN -



DEVAURATA, ACCOMPANIED BY A FEW ELDERLY PAURAVA CHIEFS, WENT TO SATYAVATI'S FATHER.

HE ALREADY HAS AN HEIR IN YOU. WHAT CHANCES WOULD MY GRANDSON HAVE AGAINST YOU?

WHAT IS YOUR OBJECTION TO GIVING YOUR DAUGHTER TO MY FATHER?



HE WOULD BE CONDEMNED TO A LIFE OF SUBORDINATION.

UPON HEARING THESE WORDS DEVAURATA TOOK AN OATH.

I VOW THAT THE SON BORN OF YOUR DAUGHTER SHALL REIGN AS THE KING.



BUT THE FISHERMAN
WAS NOT SATISFIED.

I HAVE NO DOUBT
THAT YOU WILL KEEP
YOUR WORD. BUT WHAT
ABOUT THE SONS
YOU MAY HAVE?



DEVAVRATA DID NOT INTEND TO GO
WITHOUT WINNING SATYAVATI
FOR HIS FATHER.

CHIEF OF FISHERMEN,
I HAVE GIVEN UP MY RIGHT
TO THE THRONE. I NOW
SETTLE THE MATTER OF
MY CHILDREN.



AND DEVAVRATA TOOK A TERRIBLE OATH.

FROM THIS DAY
I VOW TO REMAIN
* A BRAHMACHARIN



HEARING THESE WORDS THE GODS SHOWERED FLOWERS ON DEVAVRATA.



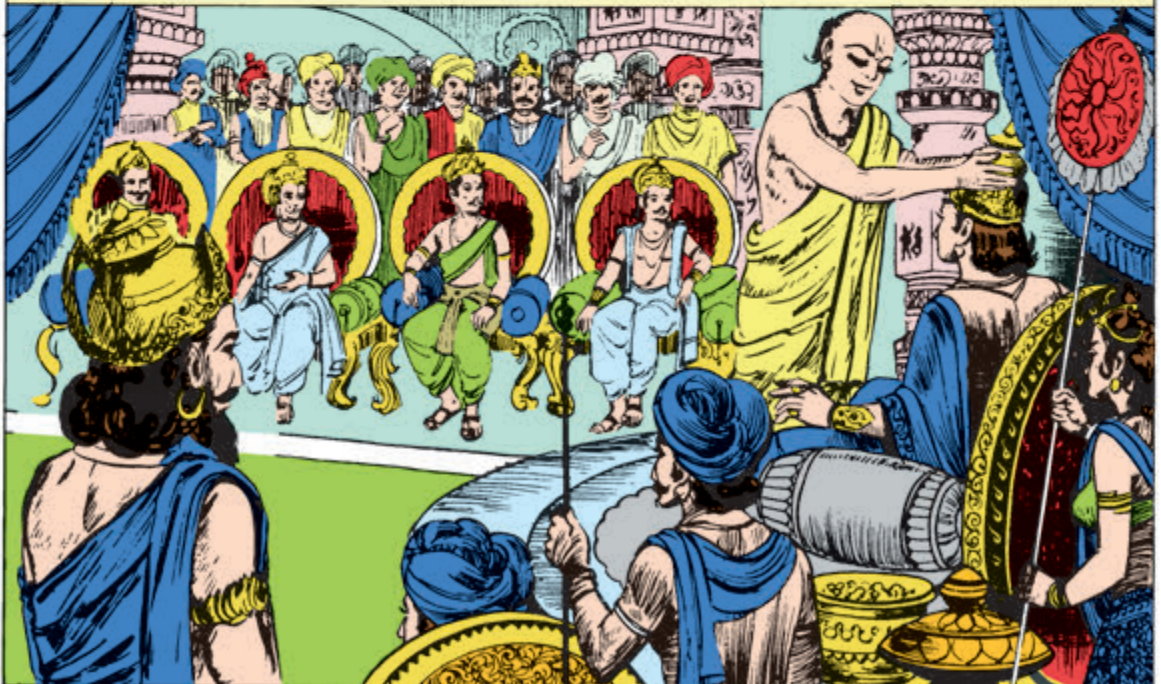
BHEESHMA WENT TO SATYAVATI.



AT HASTINAPUR BHEESHMA TOLD SHANTANU EVERYTHING.



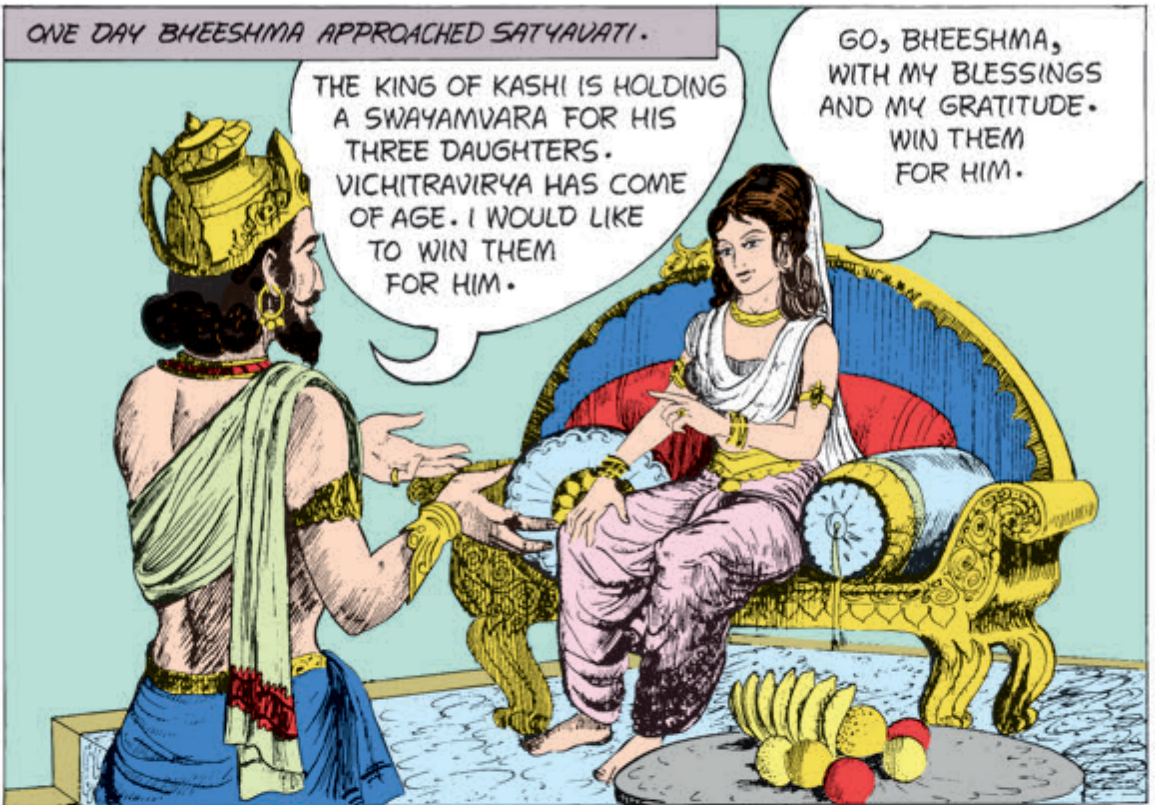
SHANTANU MARRIED SATYAVATI AND HAD TWO SONS. THE ELDER WAS KILLED IN BATTLE. WHEN SHANTANU DIED, BHEESHMA SET THE YOUNGER SON, VICHITRAVIRYA ON THE THRONE AND RULED THE KINGDOM FOR HIM.



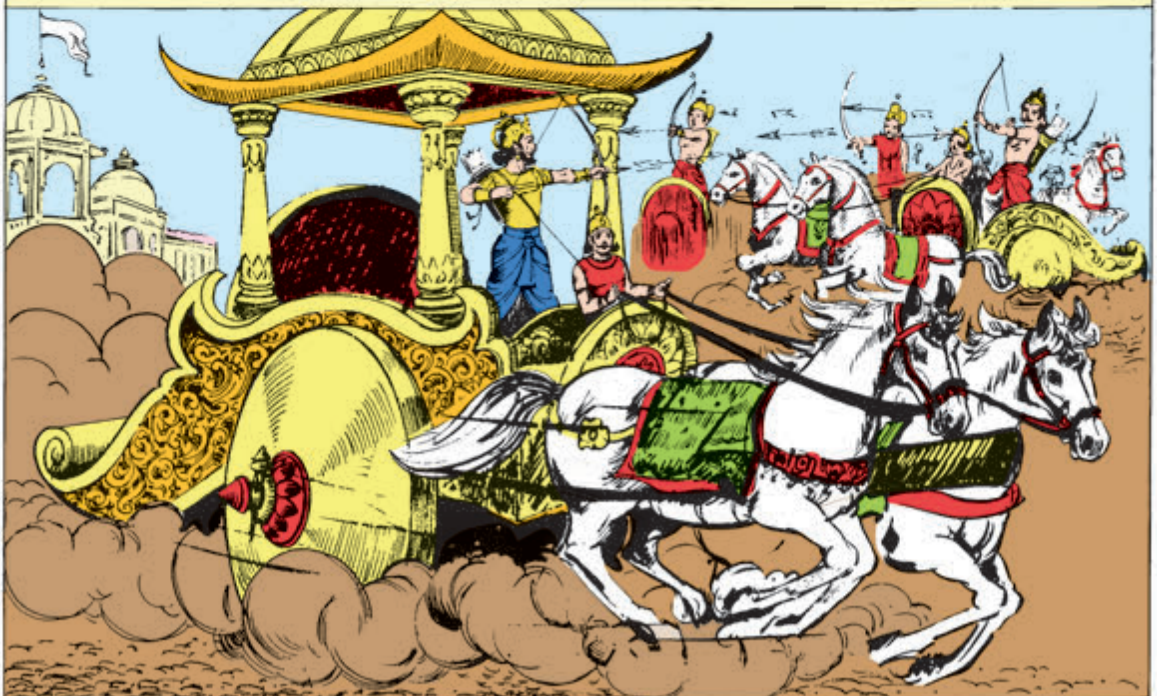
ONE DAY BHEESHMA APPROACHED SATYAVATI.

THE KING OF KASHI IS HOLDING A SWAYAMVARA FOR HIS THREE DAUGHTERS. VICHITRAVIRYA HAS COME OF AGE. I WOULD LIKE TO WIN THEM FOR HIM.

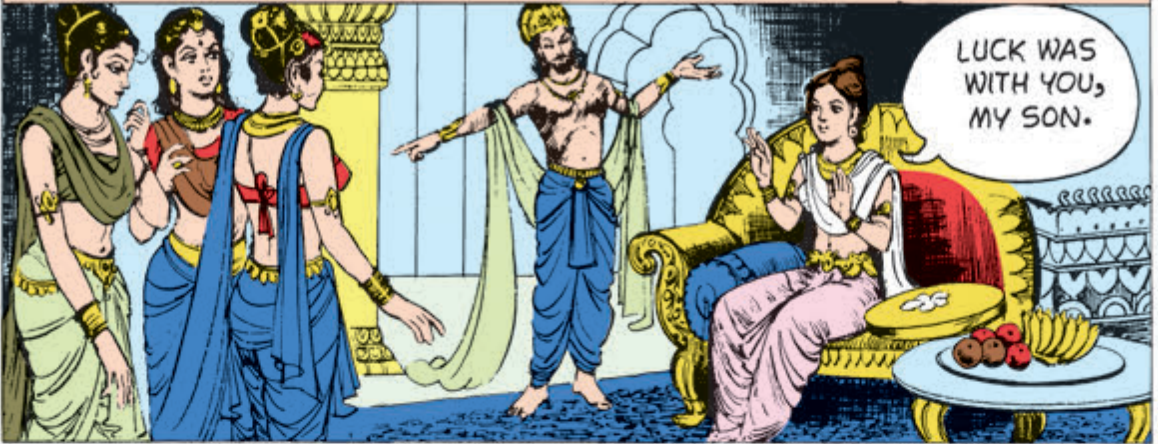
GO, BHEESHMA, WITH MY BLESSINGS AND MY GRATITUDE. WIN THEM FOR HIM.



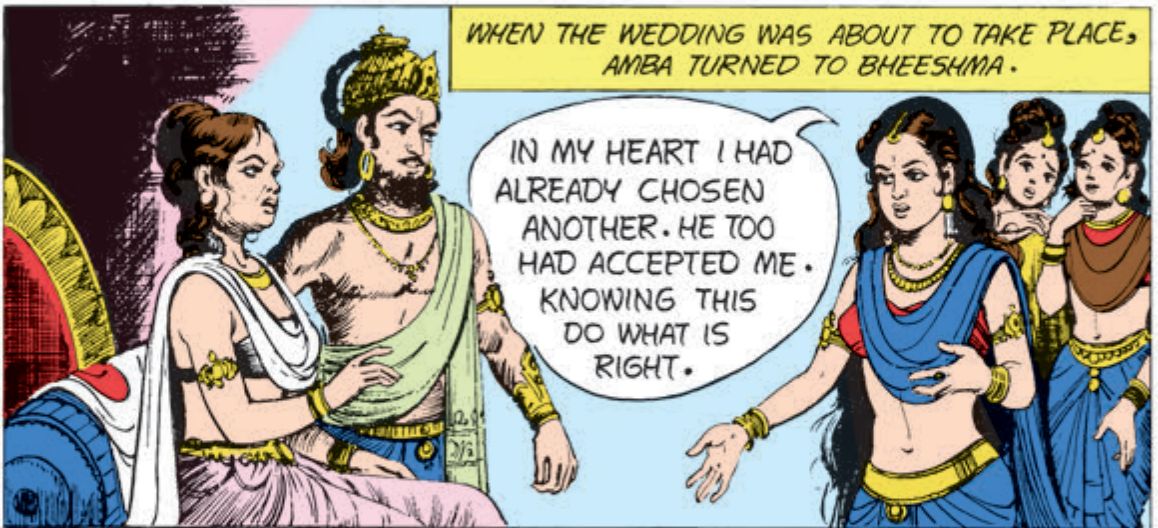
BHEESHMA WENT IN A SINGLE CHARIOT TO KASHI AND WON THE PRINCESSES DEFEATING ALL THE RIVAL KINGS WHO OPPOSED HIM.



HE BROUGHT THE PRINCESSES AMBA, AMBIKA AND AMBALIKA TO SATYAVATI.



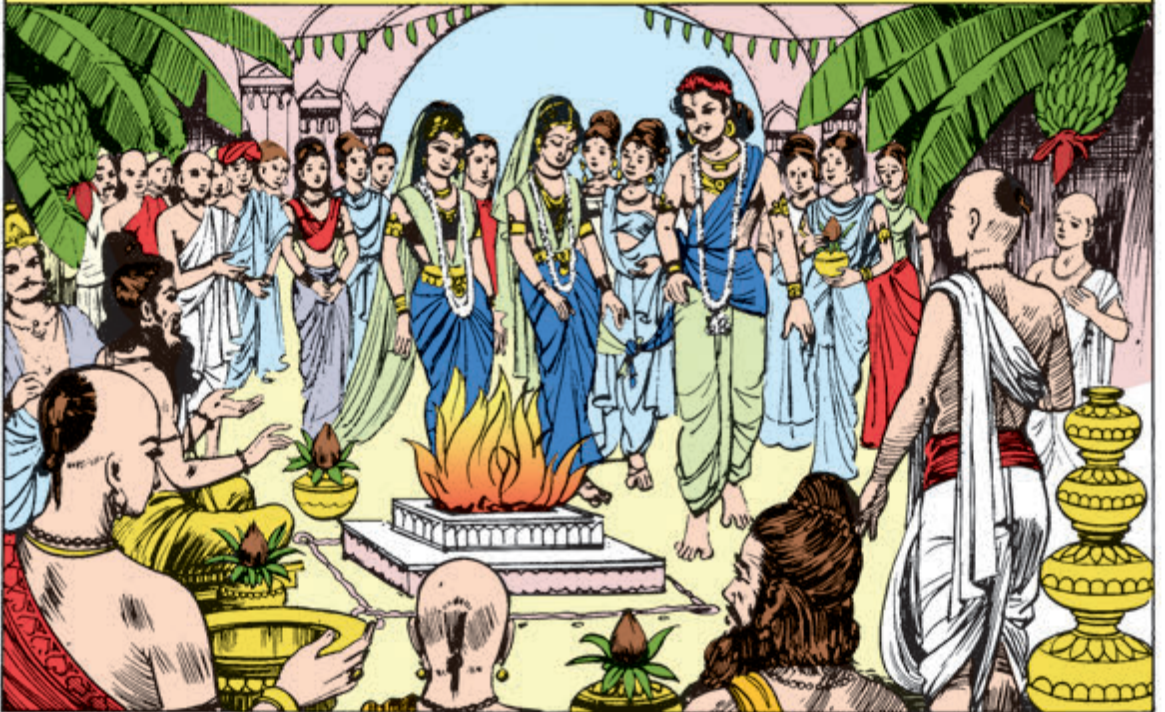
WHEN THE WEDDING WAS ABOUT TO TAKE PLACE, AMBA TURNED TO BHEESHMA.



BHEESHMA REFLECTED UPON WHAT SHOULD BE DONE, THEN DECIDED.



VICHITRAVIRYA WAS MARRIED TO AMBIKA AND AMBALIKA.



AMBA WENT BACK TO HER CHOSEN LORD, BUT -

I NO LONGER WISH TO MARRY YOU AS YOU WERE CARRIED AWAY FOR ANOTHER.



AMBA WAS FURIOUS.

BHEESHMA IS THE CAUSE OF ALL MY SUFFERING. I WILL DESTROY HIM.



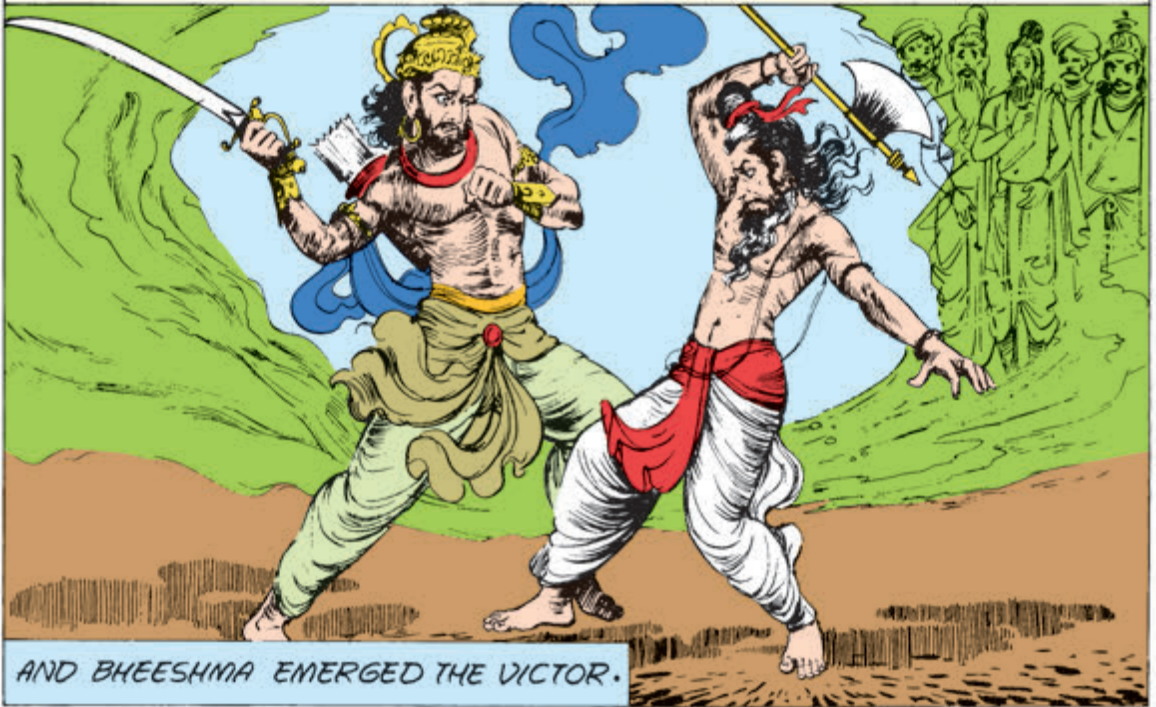
SHE WENT TO PARASHURAMA, THE SAGE WHO HATED KSHATRIYAS, AND TOLD HIM HER TALE.



PARASHURAMA ACCOMPANIED BY AMBA AND OTHER ASCETICS WENT TO HASTINAPURA AND BHEESHMA CAME TO PAY HIM HIS RESPECTS.



BHEESHMA AND PARASHURAMA MET EACH OTHER IN SINGLE-COMBAT AND FOUGHT FOR TWENTY-THREE DAYS.



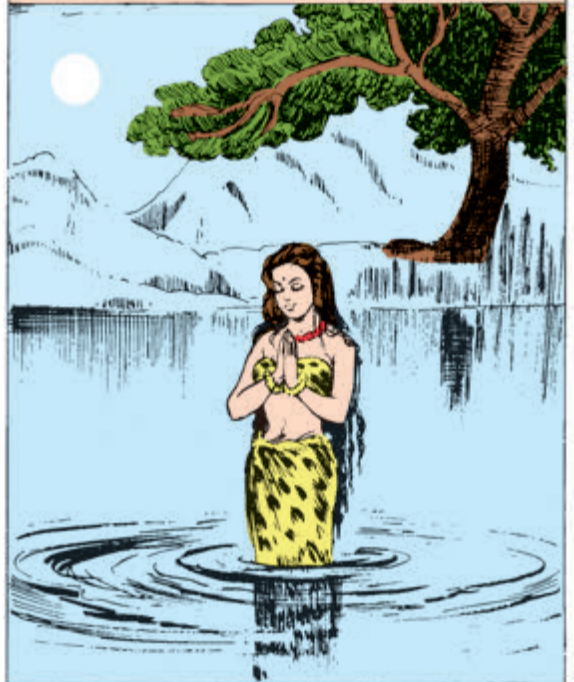
PARASHURAMA WENT TO AMBA.

I TRIED MY BEST BUT I FAILED. I ADVISE YOU TO FORGET YOUR HUMILIATION AND SEEK BHEESHMA'S PROTECTION.

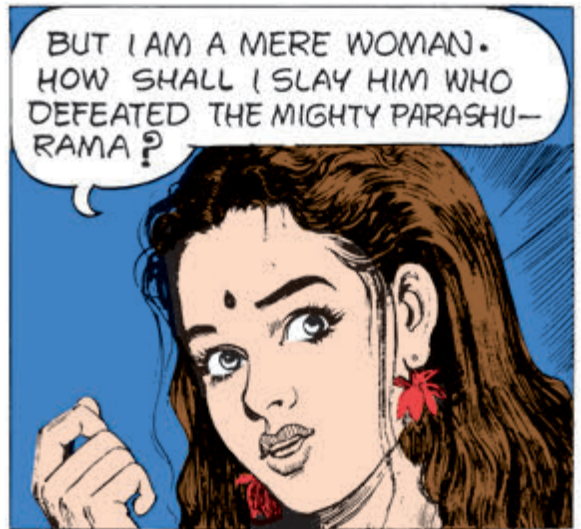
I CANNOT.



AMBA PERFORMED SEVERE PENANCES FOR TWELVE YEARS TO WIN THE GRACE OF LORD SHIVA.



LORD SHIVA, AT LAST, APPEARED BEFORE HER.

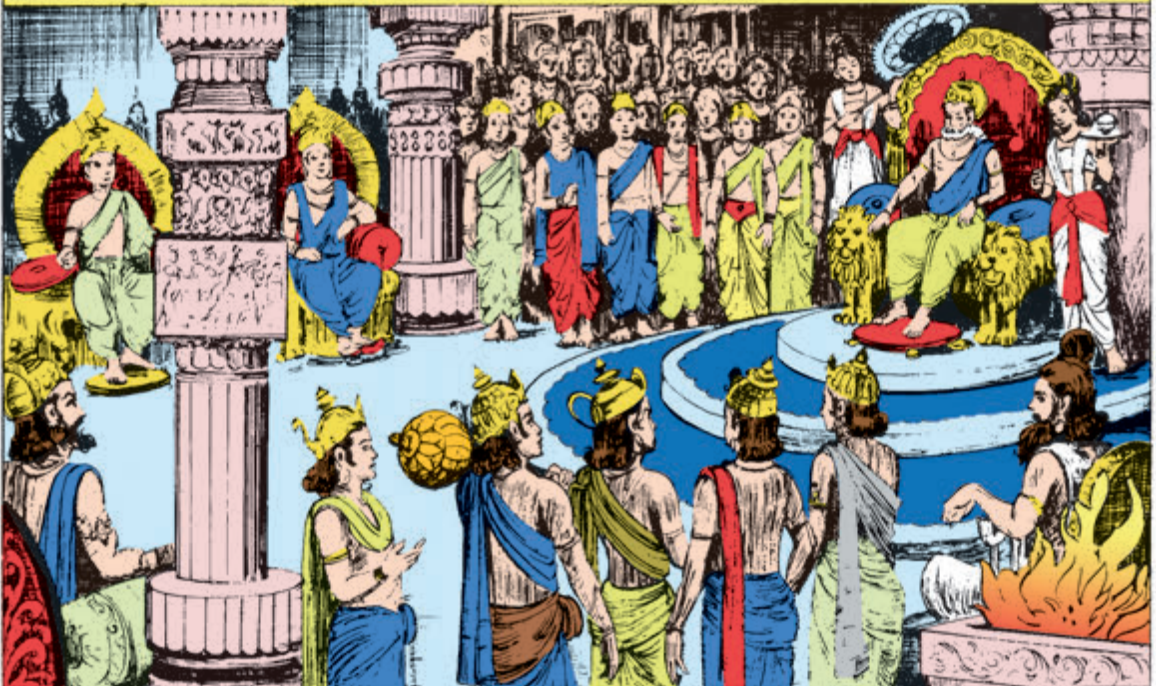


AMBA MADE A FUNERAL PYRE, LIT IT AND JUMPED INTO ITS FLAMES.

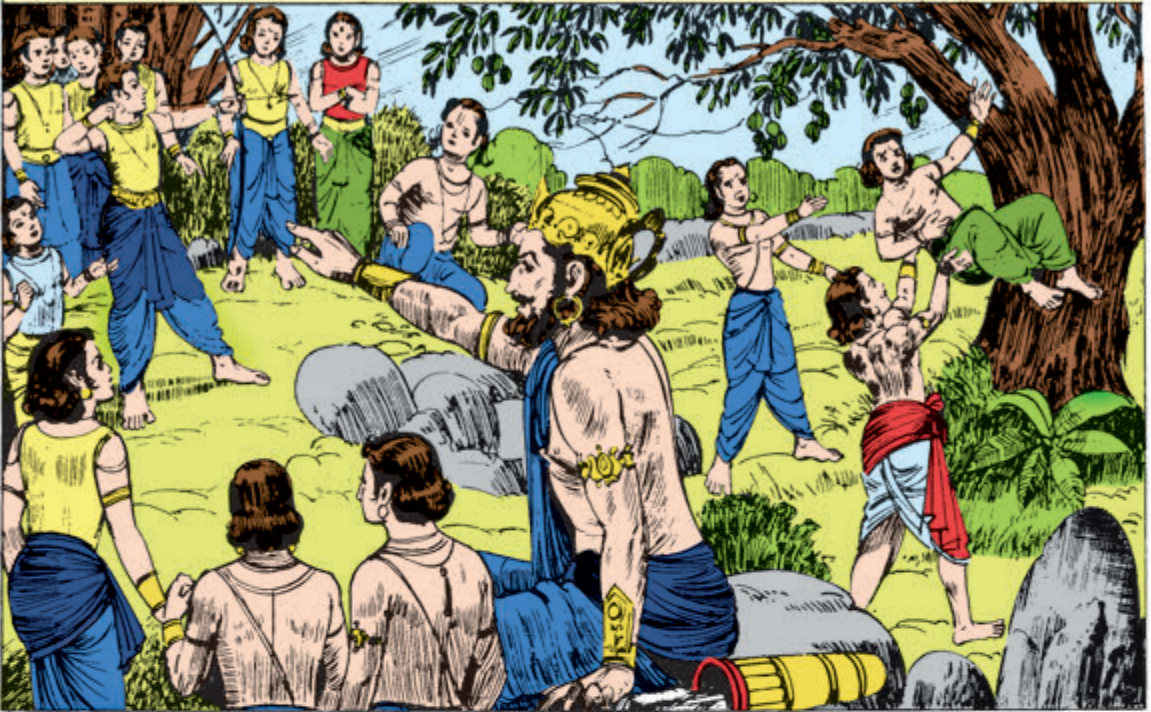


AND AS SHIVA PROMISED SHE WAS REBORN AND BECAME SHIKHANDIN.

HER SISTERS IN THE MEANWHILE HAD HAD A SON EACH - DHRITA - RASHTRA AND PANDU, WHOSE SONS WERE THE HUNDRED KAURAVAS AND FIVE PANDAVAS RESPECTIVELY.

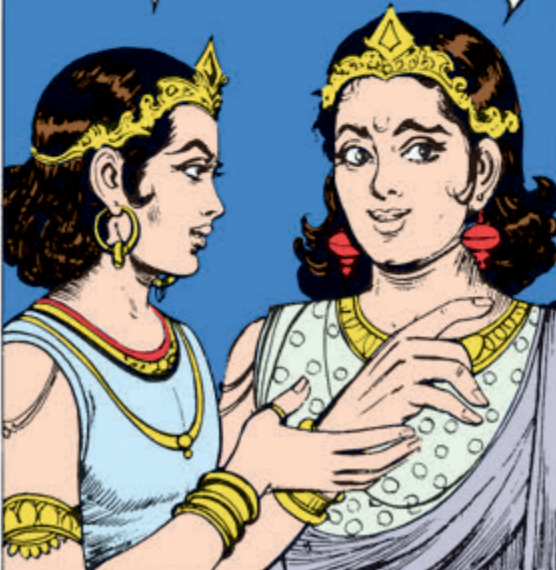


BHEESHMA SUPERVISED THE UPBRINGING OF THESE COUSINS AS HE HAD DONE THAT OF THEIR PARENTS.



BHEEMA
ALWAYS
BULLIES US!

AND THE
ELDERS
TAKE HIS SIDE!



THE CHILDHOOD ENMITY
CONTINUED INTO THEIR ADULT LIFE.

IF THE PANDAVAS
WANT THEIR SHARE
OF THE KINGDOM,
LET THEM FIGHT
FOR IT.

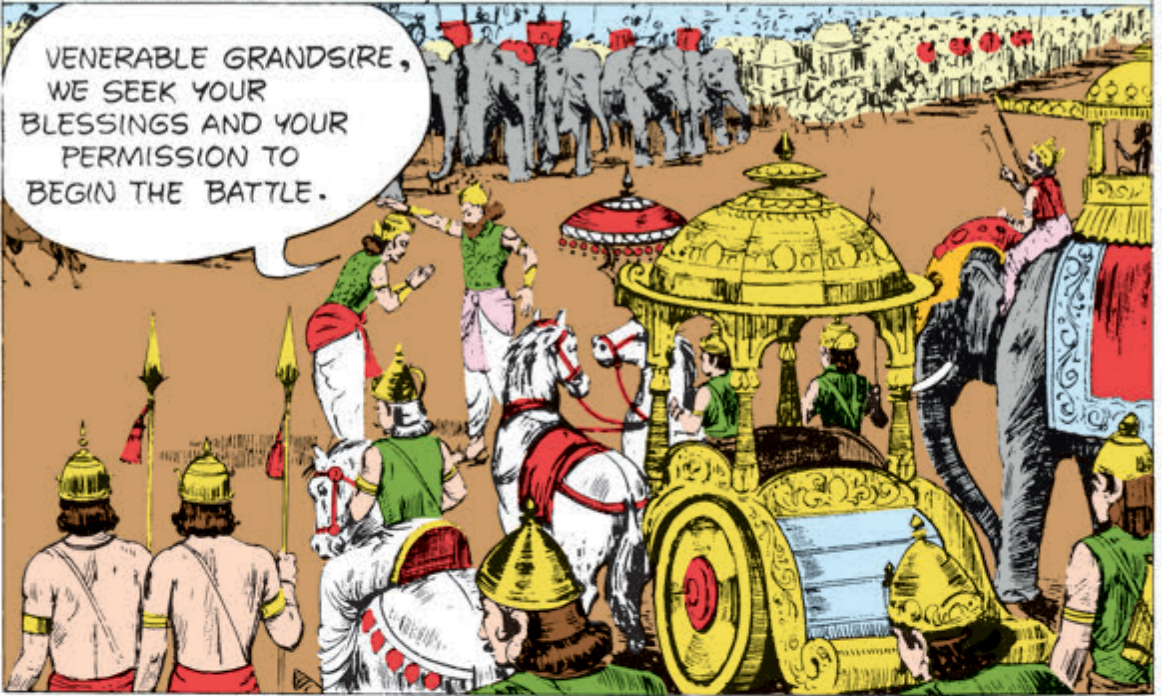
GIVE THEM
WHAT IS
THEIRS
AND AVOID
TROUBLE.



BUT THE KAURAVAS DID NOT HEED HIM

AND WAR BROKE OUT BETWEEN THE KAURAVAS AND THE PANDAVAS — THE GREAT 18-DAY WAR OF THE MAHABHARATA. ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE BATTLE THE ELDEST PANDAVA CAME TO BHEESHMA.

VENERABLE GRANDSIRE,
WE SEEK YOUR
BLESSINGS AND YOUR
PERMISSION TO
BEGIN THE BATTLE.



BHEESHMA LOVED BOTH, THE PANDAVAS AND THE KAURAVAS, BUT HE WAS DUTY-BOUND TO FIGHT ON THE SIDE OF THE KAURAVAS. THEY WERE THE SONS OF THE REIGNING KING, DHRITARASHTRA.



FOR NINE DAYS BHEESHMA AND THE KAURAVA ARMIES FOUGHT RELENTLESSLY AGAINST THE PANDAVA ARMIES. DRUPADA'S SON SHIKHANDIN WAS AN ALLY OF THE PANDAVAS.

ON THE TENTH DAY OF THE BATTLE, ARJUNA, THE PANDAVA, SHIELDING HIMSELF BEHIND SHIKHANDIN, ATTACKED BHEESHMA.



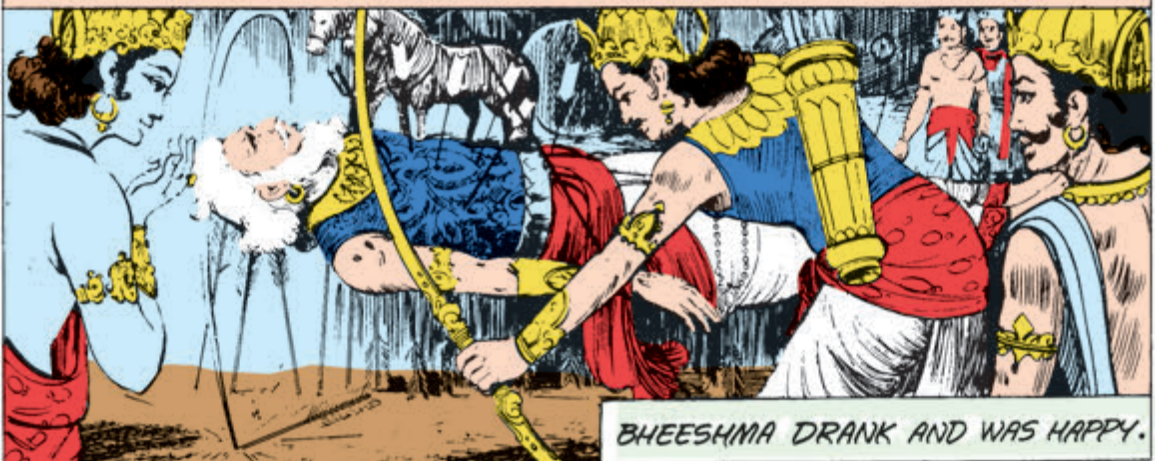
BOTH ARMIES STOPPED FIGHTING AND CROWDED AROUND THEIR BELOVED GRANDSIRE.



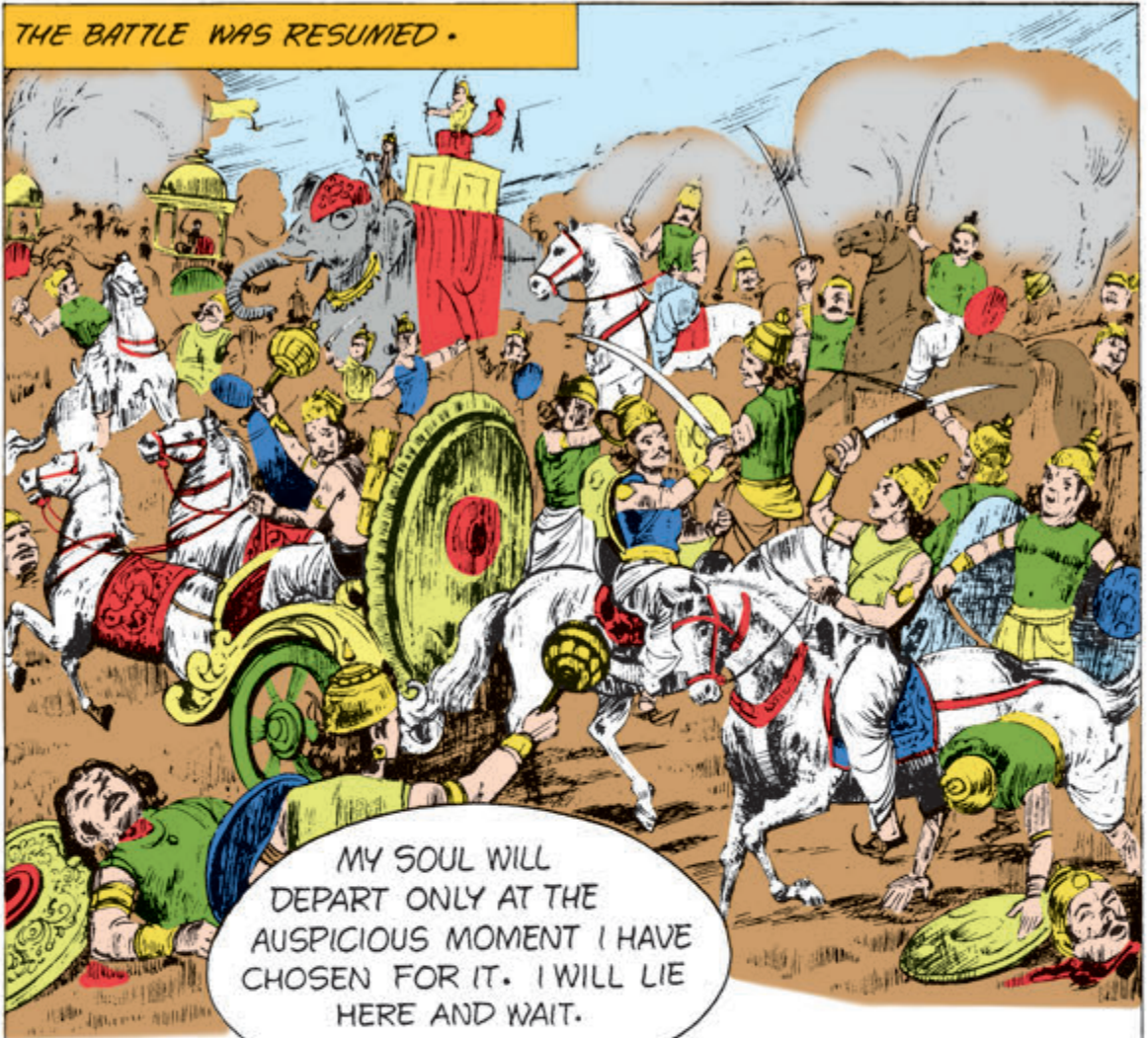
ARJUNA IMMEDIATELY PLACED THREE ARROWS UNDER BHEESHMA'S HEAD.



AT ONCE ARJUNA SHOT AN ARROW INTO THE EARTH NEAR BHEESHMA'S HEAD.



THE BATTLE WAS RESUMED .



MY SOUL WILL
DEPART ONLY AT THE
AUSPICIOUS MOMENT I HAVE
CHOSEN FOR IT. I WILL LIE
HERE AND WAIT.



THE PANDAVAS WON THE WAR. YUDHISHTHIRA, THE ELDEST OF THEM, CAME TO BHEESHMA FOR HIS BLESSINGS AND HIS ADVICE ON THE DUTIES OF A KING. AS BHEESHMA FINISHED TALKING IT WAS THE AUSPICIOUS MOMENT HE HAD CHOSEN FOR HIS DEATH AND HIS SOUL PASSED AWAY.

WHICH OF THE ACKs HAVE YOU STILL NOT READ?

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Krishna And Narakasura
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Krishna And Shishupala
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Fa Hien
Ghanshyamdas Birla
Guru Arjan
Guru Gobind Singh
Guru Har Gobind
Guru Nanak
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Hemu
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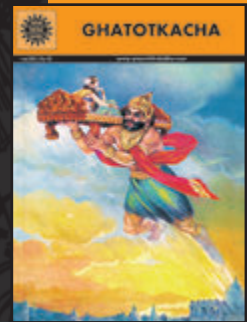
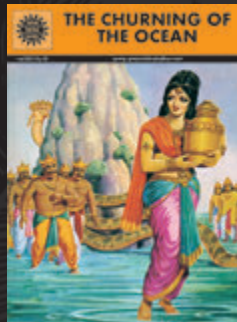
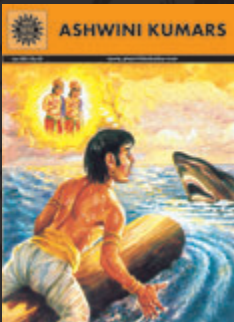


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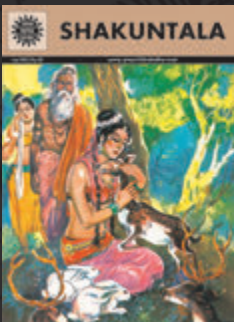
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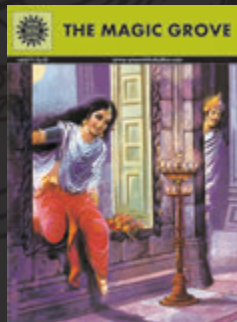
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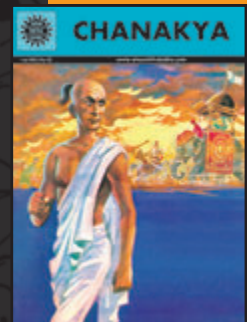
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